

PETITION TO PRIME MINISTER YAB TAN SRI MUHYIDDIN YASSIN: STOP THE OPERATIONS TO ARREST UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS, FOCUS ON THE GOAL OF CONTROLLING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

The press statements by YB Dato' Seri Hamzah Zainudin, Minister of Home Affairs on 29 May 2021 and 3 June 2021 have created the perception among many that the government has decided to launch a plan to arrest and detain undocumented migrants (or illegal immigrants in government lingo) on a massive scale over a short period of time.

We, from the various organizations that have signed this petition, view the current approach of arresting and detaining undocumented migrants at this time further complicating efforts to fight the pandemic among Malaysians, because:

1. Such operations will intimidate foreign workers, regardless of whether they are documented or undocumented. In fact, such actions would cause them to avoid any government representative and go to hide. Therefore, this will defeat the government's efforts to create herd immunity in Malaysia. Herd immunity requires vaccination for 80% of the Malaysian population, including the migrant community. Failure to reach the vaccination level of 80% of the population will delay the country's economic recovery and extend the suffering of the people.

2. There is a strong possibility that the arrest and detention of undocumented migrants at this time will result in new clusters of Covid-19 in immigration detention centres. This will increase the spread of Covid-19 among undocumented migrants and will also infect immigration officers, police officers and court staff (who are involved in remand control), as well as their family members. This possibility can and should be avoided.

3. The immigration department does not have the capacity to arrest and repatriate the two to three million undocumented migrants that are in Malaysia. According to Suhakam, estimates as of 1 July 2020 show that immigration detention centres that can only accommodate 12,530 detainees have exceeded their capacity by being filled with as many as 15,163 detainees. Besides that, more than 95% of undocumented migrants are working and contributing to the national economy. In fact, our country's economic activities also require their services.

Perhaps YB Dato' Seri Hamzah Zainudin believes that his assertiveness in this matter will help overcome the Covid-19 pandemic. However, YB should remember that every action plan taken must be based on clear, objective and reasonable scientific analysis. Currently, the approach of arresting and detaining undocumented migrants will be detrimental to the government's efforts to control the spread of Covid-19 in our country.

We sincerely hope that YAB will bring this issue to the National Security Council meeting so that a more appropriate and integrated approach can be formulated for handling undocumented migrants when Covid-19 is spreading. At this point of time, we should focus on the goal of controlling the spread of Covid-19 in our country. Other goals are secondary and should be postponed if they conflict with the primary goal that is to control and overcome the spread of

Covid-19.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Signed by:

Organisation/Group:

1. People's Health Forum (Forum Kesihatan Rakyat)

2. Citizens' Health Initiative

3. Agora Society Malaysia

4. Third World Network

5. Health Equity Initiatives

6. Parti Sosialis Malaysia

7. Aliran

8. All Women's Action Society (AWAM)

9. Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP Malaysia)

10. ALTSEAN-Burma

11. Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM)

12. Archdiocesan Human Development Commission (AHDC)

13. Asylum Access Malaysia

14. Beyond Borders Malaysia

15. Centre for Independent Journalism (CIJ)

16. Citizens Against Enforced Disappearances (CAGED)

17. Consumers Association of Penang (CAP)

18. Demokrat Kebangsaan

19. Dewan Perhimpunan China Kuala Lumpur dan Selangor (KLSCAH)

20. Dewan Pimpinan Pusat Gabungan Serikat Buruh Indonesia (DPP GSBI)

21. ENGAGE

22. Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants & Itinerants (ECMI)

23. Family Frontiers

24. Forum Ekonomi Manusiawi

25. Fugee

26. G25 Malaysia

27. GERAK

28. Geutanyoe Foundation

29. Humanity Heroes Foundation

30. IMAN Research

31. In Between Cultura

32. Institute for Leadership and Development Studies

33. International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific

34. Islamic Renaissance Front

35. Jaringan kampung Orang Asli Semenanjung Malaysia

36. Jaringan Rakyat Tertindas (JERIT)

37. Koalisi Buruh Migran Berdaulat

38. Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Bina Karya Utama (LBH-BKU)

39. Liga Rakyat Demokratik

40. LLG Cultural Development Centre

41. Mahasiswa Amanah Nasional

42. Mahasiswa Keadilan Malaysia

43. Majlis Kebajikan Kanak-kanak Malaysia (MKKM)

44. Malaysia Hindu Sangam

45. Malaysian CARE

46. Malaysian Health Coalition

47. Malaysian Medical Association (MMA)

48. Malaysian United Democratic Alliance (MUDA)

49. Migrant Workers Right to Redress Coalition

50. Monitoring Sustainability of Globalisation

51. Muslim Professionals Forum

52. MyPJ

53. New Student Movement Alliance of Malaysia (NESA)

54. North South Initiative

55. Our Journey

56. PACOS Trust

57. Pemuda Sosialis

58. People Like Us Support Ourselves (PLUsos)

59. Persatuan Kebajikan Anak Anak Miskin Sabah

60. Persatuan Kebajikan Biji Sawi (Mustard Seed Soup Kitchen)

61. Persatuan Kebajikan Komuniti Dan Dialog

62. Persatuan Sahabat Wanita Selangor

63. Pertubuhan IKRAM Malaysia

64. Pertubuhan Jaringan Orang Asli Johor (JPOAJ)

65. PeSAWAH

66. Prison Fellowship Malaysia Sabah

67. Projek Wawasan Rakyat (POWR)

68. Pusat Komas

69. Refuge For The Refugees

70. Sabah Reform Initiative (SARI)

71. Sahabat Alam Malaysia

72. Saya Anak Bangsa Malaysia (SABM)

73. Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia (SBMI) Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT)

74. Sisters in Islam

75. Stairway to Hope

76. Student Progressive Front UUM

77. Student Unity Front UKM

78. Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM)

79. Tenaganita

80. Tindak Malaysia

81. Titular Roman Catholic Archbishop of KL (TRCAKL)

82. Together Against Cancer (TAC)

83. UMAN Y

Individuals:

1. Abu Mufakhir

2. Ahmad Kamal

3. Ananti Rajasingam

4. Andrew Khoo

5. Anthony David

6. Arief Subhan

7. Arutchelvan

8. Bernice Ho

9. Bin Rites

10. Celine Khoo

11. Charles Bertille

12. Cikgu Mohd Azmi b Abdul Hamid

13. CR Selva

14. Dato' Dr Amar-Singh HSS

15. Dato M. Ramachelvam

16. Dato Noor Aziah Mohd Awal

17. Datuk Ambiga Sreenevasan

18. Datuk Dr Anwar Fazal

19. Datuk Dr Toh Kin Woon

20. Dr Alice Nah

21. Dr Ayesah Uy Abubakar

22. Dr Hartini Zainudin

23. Dr Jeyakumar Devaraj

24. Dr Lee Boon Chye

25. Dr Ryan Chua

26. Elain Lockman

27. Elaine Lau

28. Faisal Tehrani

29. Hamidon Ali

30. Hana Maisurah

31. Heidy Quah Gaik Li

32. Hew Kuen Hin

33. Jarud Romadan

34. Jeremy Kwan

35. K. Jeyaraj

36. Kelvin Soimin

37. Lilian Si

38. Lim Siew Kiau

39. Linda Lumayag

40. Loh Jon Ming

41. LY Phang

42. Lynn Tung

43. M.Pusenthi P.Maniam

44. Mahirah Hanis

45. Mary Shanthi Dairiam

46. Mohd Nadzir bin Mohd Nordin

47. Muhammad Sha'ani bin Abdullah

48. Mui Mei Moon

49. Nazihah Muhamad Noor

50. Ng Peng Wah

51. Nik Elin Zurina Bt Nik Abdul Rashid

52. Ooi Vern Hau

53. Peter Pang

54. Prof Shad Saleem Faruki

55. Pua Lay Peng

56. Ronnie Hii

57. Saha Deva A. Arunasalam

58. Salina Hussein

59. Sangeeta choudhury

60. Sivarajan A

61. Sunita Rajakumar

62. Surina Shukri

63. Teng Pooi Kui

64. Teoh Siang Chin

65. Thamboo Devaraj

66. Veronica Anne Retnam

67. Victoria Ng Yiow Kheng

68. Vizla Kumaresan

69. Yap Heng Lung

70. Zahid Alom

71. Zhen Ling Ong